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October 11, 2015: Liberals Fooling Themselves About Political Money

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Title: Liberals Fooling Themselves About Political Money

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10/11/2015—The New York Times today shows how liberals fool themselves about money. On page one, there is the big story about how half of the money spent on the Presidential campaign comes from just 158 families. This money, the story intones, is keeping the Republican Party from supporting policies, like higher taxes on the wealthy, supported by 2/3 of Americans. So, money is the political problem rather than poorly conceived or communicated liberal ideas. Except that other stories suggest this is not true. First of all, as Frank Bruni suggests in the Sunday Review, money has not been the primary factor this year. “Remember how much money was supposed to matter, partly for the commercials it could buy? Well, the ads didn’t have, or aren’t having, the intended effect for Bush, Perry, Kasich, Bobby Jindal (another floundering governor) and — on the Democratic side — Hillary Clinton.” The reason that Republicans don’t propose higher taxes on the wealthy, including someone like Trump who does not chase donor money as much as others do, is that they don’t believe in them. They don’t want government to get more money. They think it is a bad idea. Consider the case of Ray and Melissa Lewie featured in the Sunday Business Section. They are angry about stagnant wages. But they don’t blame the wealthy. They blame government. “When asked to assign blame for stagnating wages, he and his wife pointed to the federal government. Regulations and high taxes, he said, not lower wages abroad, led those textile mill companies to move to Mexico.” “‘Our money is being wasted, wasted, wasted,’ she added. ‘And now we’re paying more and more, and our debts are going up and up, and we need to stop the debt. We have to find someone that’s going to actually take control and say, “Stop spending.”’ Her husband said, ‘I don’t think it could get any worse.’ ‘The government is taking 39 percent now,’ said Mr. Lewie, a little morosely, referring to the top income tax bracket. Not for the first time during the meal, he worried that high taxes would discourage the wealthy from producing jobs. ‘If they want 45 percent, they’ll take that and spend more. If they want 60 percent, they’ll take that and spend more. How much is enough?’” Liberals have to stop talking about taxes and start talking about unions. Start talking—more, that is—about the minimum wage. That is the kind of message that might reach Mr. and Mrs. Lewie.